



# THE POST:

## Professional Online Supports for Teaching

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Dear Colleagues:

The new year brings the opportunity to refocus our sights on where we are going in the months ahead and reflect on the events of the previous year. This may already be occurring in your schools, as teachers continue to lead rich and meaningful discussions around student learning and growth in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The analysis of assessment data, such as PARCC results, guides your PLC conversations which defines the work to be accomplished by the end of the school year.

Tools and resources are available to support your PLC discussions around the cycle of teaching and learning, including the Blended Online Learning Modules (BOLM) and the Curricular Framework. The newly launched Seasons of Professional Learning can connect you to free monthly workshops which will provide you with new ideas and resources to support your instruction. Thank you for continuing to invest in your students' learning by devoting time and energy to the important work of collaborative conversations.

Dr. Laura C. Morana  
Acting Chief Academic Officer  
Division of Teaching and Learning

## Division News

### New Jersey Grant Award

The Department has received a federal grant award from the United States Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. New Jersey is one of 18 states that will receive awards under the [Preschool Development Grant program](#) to continue expanding access to high-quality preschool for children from low- to moderate-income families.

### Seasons of Professional Learning

The division is offering New Jersey educators a monthly update on workshops called Seasons of Professional Learning. [Join the listserv](#) and get information delivered right to your e-mail. Visit the [Department's Calendar of Events](#) at any time for a full listing of free professional learning sessions throughout the year.

### Annual Polenta Fest

Sunday, January 8, is the date for the [Annual Polenta Fest](#) sponsored by the [New Jersey Italian Heritage Commission \(NJIHC\)](#). This free event will be held in Princeton at the [Dorothea House](#). Visit the website for more information on this and other free educational events.

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## English Language Arts

### Children's Book Awards Luncheon (CBAL)

Each year, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) presents [awards to authors of children's literary, nonfiction and poetry books](#) at its annual Children's Book Award Luncheon (CBAL). Find the authors and their books awarded the Charlotte Huck Award for Outstanding Fiction for Children, the Orbis Pictus Award for nonfiction, and the Poetry Award for 2017. For each award, "honor" and "recommended" books are listed.

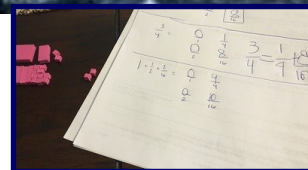
### Sharing Strategies and Research

[Literacy How](#) provides educators with "research-based knowledge and effective practices to succeed." [Sign up to receive a free monthly newsletter](#) with teaching tips on literacy instruction by founder Dr. Margie Gillis. [December's e-mail newsletter](#) focuses on spelling, and includes a link to [SPELLTalk, a free listserv](#) discussion group, for educators interested in best practices related to spelling skills.

## Mathematics

### Enhancing Understanding of Fractions

Katrina Schwartz, a writer for [KQED's MindShift education blog](#), discusses neuroscience findings which may help in teaching mathematics. The data indicates that certain instructional practices can deepen students' conceptual understandings of fractions, shown in some studies as a factor in mastering algebra. She cites work by researcher Valorie Salimpoor, who co-designed a [free online videogame called Fog Stone Isle](#) by Cognition.



## Science

### How Students Learn Science

This [infographic from Next Generation Science Standards](#) (NGSS) highlights the connections between the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science and what is understood about how students learn science.

### Toshiba/National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) Competition

The [Toshiba/NSTA Exploravision Competition](#) allows students to go "beyond the typical student science competition and into what it takes to bring ideas to reality." Educators can register and lead student teams in choosing a technology, conducting research and anticipating obstacles, as well as explore opportunities 20 years into the future. Learn more about creating and submitting projects by February 6 at [the Exploravision Competition website for teachers](#) and [FAQs](#).





## Social Studies

### Webinar for Educators and Media Specialists

This [free webinar for K-12 educators and media specialists](#) will focus on engaging students in authentic inquiry-based learning activities using primary sources. Christopher Zarr from the [National Archives](#) will talk about New Jersey-specific resources and provide instructional strategies to help students analyze documents and use evidence to construct arguments.

### Resources on the World War I Centennial

The [United States World War One Centennial Commission](#) provides history on the nation's entry into the war 100 years ago this year, as well as the state's contributions to the war effort. The [New Jersey state page](#) contains a variety of teaching resources, including an [interactive map of sites](#) related to New Jersey's war activities.

## World Language

### Promoting Best Practices

[LangTalks](#) is an open-access resource for K-16 world language educators, providing brief, peer-reviewed teaching videos to support professional learning and best practices. The videos are created by and for language educators and are aligned to the World-Readiness Standards of the [American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages](#) (ACTFL).



## Educational Technology

### Future Ready Summit 2017

[Future Ready Schools – New Jersey](#) will host the [Future Ready Summit 2017](#) on January 11 and 12 at the New Jersey Institute of Technology's campus in Newark. This Future Ready Summit, facilitated by the [Alliance for Excellent Education](#) and sponsored by Google, is free of charge and open to all New Jersey district technology teams.

## 21st Century Life and Careers

### Program Reapprovals

The Office of Career Readiness reminds districts that Friday, January 20, is the due date for CTE program reapproval applications for the [Business Management and Administration Career Cluster](#). Applications must be submitted on the [Career and Technical Education Data Management System](#)(CTE-DMS). For more information, view the [December 13 Broadcast memo](#).



### Structured Learning Experiences (SLE)

Structured Learning Experiences (SLE) allow students to explore career opportunities; develop skills through Career Ready Practices; and clarify personal, academic and career goals. The Office of Career Readiness invites districts to [share news about successful SLE programs](#), experiences or stories. Selected submissions may appear in a future issue of The POST.

## Assessment

### 2017 PARCC Portfolio Appeals

In this [December 13 Broadcast memo](#), information was provided to staff who will use the Portfolio Appeals Process for students failing to meet their assessment graduation requirement in ELA and mathematics. Included in the memo are guidance documents and forms for all appeals.



### 2015– 16 PARCC Released Items

On the [Partnership Resource Center](#) website, find the released [2015- 16 Test Items for Grades 3-8](#). Information on 2015– 16 test results is on [PARCC's website](#), as well as the [Department's Assessment webpage](#).

## Publishing Opportunities

### Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) *Express*



The [March 23 issue of ASCD Express](#) will focus on "Getting Personalization Right." The editors are looking for brief articles which "delve into various ways educators define student-centered learning and what it looks like in schools." Scroll to view more information, including the deadline for submissions.

## Further Reading

### Social Media Fosters Communication



This [Hechinger Report article "Getting Schooled in Social Media"](#) talks about social media as an effective communication venue between schools and families. The author advocates using social media based on recent findings that "timely text-messages to parents – including homework and exam reminders, school attendance notifications and suggestions for at-home literacy activities – improved student math and literacy performance."

**Before you go...**

**See you in February!**



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